

Grafton Mill Overlay Bylaw

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Background

- Previously, we developed a Mill Overlay Bylaw intended to allow for the adaptive reuse of institutional buildings in Grafton.
- The proposed bylaw included updated definitions and corresponding Use Table regulations for “Incubator or Innovation Center”; “Makerspace”; “Light Industrial”; and “Heavy Industrial”.
- The proposed bylaw allows for the reuse of mill and institutional buildings sixty years old or older of 5000 square feet or greater to allow for two or more dwelling units, with the idea that this could go alongside office or light industrial uses.

Background

- In recent conversations with David Robbins and Fiona Coughlan, there has been discussion on how to continue with the implementation of some sort of adaptive reuse bylaw.
- Should we continue with the original bylaw, which is limited to large mill and institutional buildings, or expand the bylaw into a broader adaptive reuse bylaw that would allow for large and small buildings to be repurposed into multi-family housing while preserving historic characteristics?
- There is a concern that there aren't necessarily a substantial amount of these mill and institutional buildings that would qualify – expanding the qualifications could allow for a number of commercial buildings.

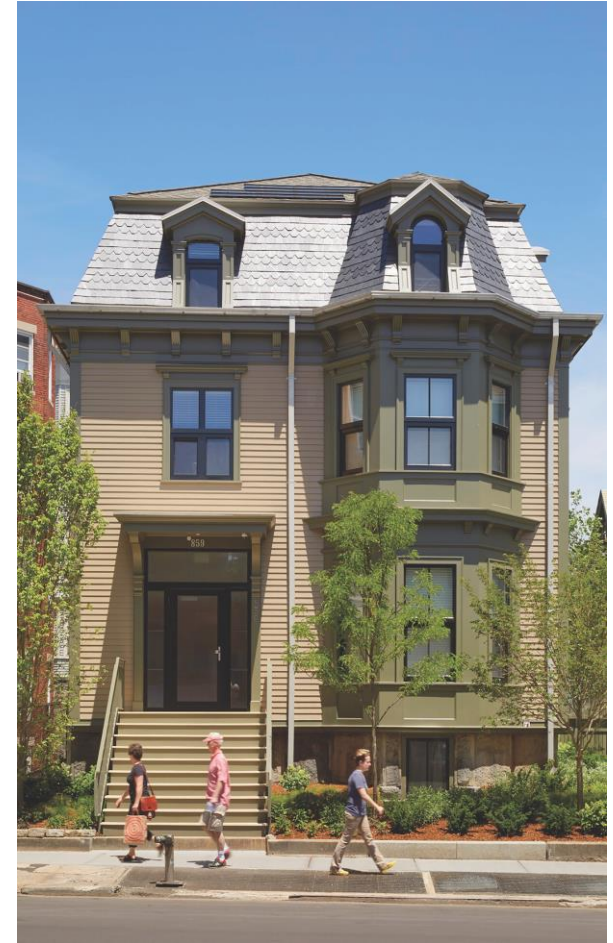
Expanding the bylaw

- There are several options for expanding the Mill Overlay bylaw to include more general adaptive reuse.
- Allowing for conversion of newer, smaller, and commercial buildings would allow for a greater number of candidates compared to the original bylaw – we have identified over thirty commercial buildings over 5000 square feet.
- Allowing for the conversion of single-family homes into multi-family homes or commercial space would help preserve the aesthetic character of a neighborhood while allowing for more uses and reducing development costs for new construction.

Examples



This furniture store in Brockton was converted into affordable housing while maintaining the historic architecture.



This 1885 Victorian in Cambridge was converted to multi-family housing, along with adoption of near net-zero energy standards.

Bylaw considerations

- Expanding the adaptive reuse bylaw may require the incorporation of new definitions.
- The Adaptive Reuse Overlay in Leicester includes provision for a horizontal mixed-use development, which would allow for presence of ground-floor retail along with ground-floor residential housing. This would make sense for the reuse of a strip mall, which is an increasing trend in planning.
- In order to make adaptive reuse more attractive to developers, in order to preserve existing buildings, considerations such as a density bonus may be useful.